

I am an early adopter in satellite TV. I purchased a DirecTV system in 1994 and kept it until I switched over to Voom/Rainbow DBS last year. Voom has forced the issue of HDTV, which neither Echostar nor DirecTV has even still supplied with enough to satisfy me.

I am very disturbed that Echostar will be buying the satellite that Voom is being broadcast from. Echostar has a poor track record of supplying HDTV and not only are they going to be purchasing the actual satellite, but also the frequency licenses that Voom needs. These are licenses that they were not allowed to bid on in the first place for fear of creating an oligopoly.

As a taxpaying citizen of the USA, I feel that should Echostar be allowed to purchase the Rainbow 1 DBS satellite and corresponding transponder licenses, the public good is not being served. The government has been charged with protecting the public good and history has consistently shown that in markets that are not a natural monopoly, competition is in the best interest of the consumer and also in the national interest.

Voom is one of the best things to happen to the satellite TV consumer, even those who do not receive Voom, simply for the increased competition. In addition, its efforts will help speed the transition to digital TV, which is most certainly in the nation's best interest. However, to be in the satellite business, one must have a satellite, an uplink facility and transponder frequencies. In one fell swoop, Voom might be missing all three and that would be the end of a third competitor in the industry.

Please do not let Echostar do an end-run of the former FCC license auction and hurt competition, driving my choice from the marketplace. Do not approve the sale and transfer of the Voom satellite and licenses to Echostar while there is another interested party.